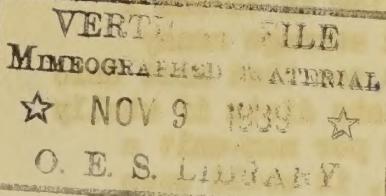


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SOME FACTS ABOUT FARM-FAMILY LIVING^{/1}

Assembled by
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In following up the discussion of facts on land classification, land tenure, agricultural production, and farm incomes with facts on farm-family living, we are pursuing a logical sequence because conditions in each of these lines and in many others influence the living patterns of farm people and help to set their living standards.

Most of my figures are quoted from the Consumer Purchases Study of 1935-36 carried out by the Bureau of Home Economics in cooperation with the Works Progress Administration and other agencies. In this study, farm family living records were secured in 17 different type-of-farming areas. In the North and West only native white farm families with both husband and wife were included in the study. Most tabulations do not include families receiving relief during the period covered by the study.

Crawford, Knox, and Richland Counties, Ohio, and Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, were selected to represent typical general-farming areas. Twenty (2 percent) of the original sample of 836 Ohio families received some form of relief. Records on money incomes and on farm-furnished goods were obtained from 816 nonrelief Ohio families. Part of these families gave data on expenditures for a year. Food consumption records covering one week periods were obtained from a number of these families.

Most farm families have a limited amount of cash to spend (B.H.E. negative no. 46, F.F.L. Outlook, 1940).

Even with some employment off the farm and the value of house-occupancy, fuel and home-furnished food reckoned in as nonmoney income, at least half the farm families in the country in 1939 probably had net family incomes of less than \$1,050, while comparatively few of the others had net incomes over \$1,500 (F.F.L. Outlook, 1940). Of the two and one-fifth million nonrelief farm families whose incomes fell between \$500 and \$999 in 1935-36, more than half had between \$500 and \$749. It is significant that much of the Farm Family Living Outlook Chart Book for 1940 is built around situations in the group that includes the next to the largest number of nonrelief farm families, those with net money and nonmoney incomes between \$750 and \$1,000.

^{/1} Presented at Annual Conference of Extension Agents at Columbus, Ohio, October 13, 1939.

Net family income figures for the 816 families in the general farming counties of Crawford, Knox, and Richland follow in tables 1 and 2. Restated in terms of average cash income and average money value of farm-furnished food per person per week, we see that most Ohio farm families need to be good planners. Since adequate diets if wholly purchased at retail prices, cost from \$2.40 to \$3.40 per man-unit a week, or from \$125 to \$177 a year (June 1939 prices), it would seem that the family food supply needs to be an important part of their plans.

Table 1.--Average net money income and value of home furnished food per family and per capita of 816 nonrelief farm families in Crawford, Knox, and Richland Counties, Ohio, 1935-36.

| Family income class money and nonmoney | Families | | Average per family | | Average per capita | |
|---|---|------------------------------------|---------------------|---|---------------------|---|
| | Percent- age of total/ ¹ | Average number of persons | Net money income | Value of farm fur- nished food | Net money income | Value of farm fur- nished food |
| \$ 500- 999 | 31 | 3.3 | \$ 352 | Year \$271 | Week \$2.05 | Week \$1.58 |
| 1,000-1,499 | 31 | 4. | 661 | 350 | 3.18 | 1.68 |
| 1,500-1,999 | 19 | 4.3 | 1,075 | 404 | 4.81 | 1.81 |
| 2,000-2,499 | 8 | 4.5 | 1,587 | 450 | 6.78 | 1.92 |

^{1/1} 4 percent of families fell in family income class \$0-499; 7 percent, in class \$2,500 and over.

Source: Bureau of Home Economics.

Farm incomes differ in different parts of Ohio. (See B.H.E. negative no. 45, F.F.L. Chart Book, 1940, page 6, "Gross family income as divided among farm operating expenditures, family living, and change in net worth - four selected counties in Pennsylvania and Ohio, 1935-36".)

After farm operating expenses are subtracted from gross cash income the balance is available for family living. The share taken by farm operating costs increases as gross farm income increases. (See table 4.)

In Ohio there are many farm families for whom a \$100 increase in income, either in money or in farm-furnished goods, would mean a distinct rise in living standards.

Are we thinking in terms of raising living standards for the bulk of farm families as well as of increasing the aggregate income from agriculture?

Table 2.—Distribution of 816^{1/1} nonrelief farm families in Crawford, Knox, and Richland Counties, Ohio, by net money and nonmoney income per family and per capita

| Family income class - net money and nonmoney income | Families | | | Average net money per family | | | | | | Average per capita | |
|---|------------------------|-----------------|-------|------------------------------|-------|--------|-------|--------|-----------------------------|--------------------|--------------------------------|
| | Percentage of total | Average size | Farm | Non- farm | Total | Food | Other | Total | Total money and nonmoney | Money income | Value of home produced food |
| \$ 0- 499 | 4 | 2.6 | \$.9 | \$ 54 | \$ 45 | \$ 209 | \$ 95 | \$ 304 | \$ 349 | \$ 17 | \$ 80 |
| 500- 999 | 31 | 3.3 | 231 | 71 | 352 | 271 | 162 | 433 | 785 | 107 | 82 |
| 1,000-1,499 | 31 | 4. | 519 | 142 | 661 | 350 | 224 | 574 | 1,235 | 165 | 88 |
| 1,500-1,999 | 19 | 4.3 | 853 | 222 | 1,075 | 404 | 244 | 648 | 1,723 | 250 | 94 |
| 2,000-2,499 | 8 | 4.5 | 1,179 | 408 | 1,587 | 450 | 350 | 800 | 2,387 | 353 | 100 |
| 2,500 and over | 7 | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- |

^{1/1} 610 all or part owners and 206 renters.

Source: Combined Form F-292-1 and F-292-2, Consumer Purchases Study, 1935-36, U. S. Bureau of Home Economics.

Table 3.—Average value of food produced at home for family use by 816^{1/1} farm families in Crawford, Knox, and Richland Counties, Ohio, by income class and source of food

| Family income class - net money and nonmoney income | All food | | | | | Poultry | | | Other meat | | Potatoes from garden | | Other food | |
|---|----------|-------|-------|-------|---------|---------|------------|-------------------------|---------------|--------|-------------------------|---------------|---------------|--|
| | All food | Milk | Cream | Eggs | Poultry | Pork | Other meat | Potatoes from garden | Other food | Fruits | Other food | Other food | Other food | |
| \$ 0- 499 | \$ 209 | \$ 37 | \$ 37 | \$ 22 | \$ 19 | \$ 47 | \$ 10 | \$ 11 | \$ 18 | \$ 7 | \$ 1 | | | |
| 500- 999 | 271 | 45 | 45 | 26 | 21 | 65 | 15 | 11 | 27 | 11 | 5 | | | |
| 1,000-1,499 | 350 | 59 | 53 | 29 | 25 | 89 | 26 | 14 | 34 | 16 | 5 | | | |
| 1,500-1,999 | 404 | 70 | 58 | 33 | 31 | 95 | 27 | 15 | 52 | 17 | 6 | | | |
| 2,000-2,499 | 450 | 80 | 62 | 36 | 29 | 105 | 40 | 17 | 56 | 17 | 8 | | | |

^{1/1} 610 all or part owners and 206 renters.

Source: Taken from F-292-3, Consumer Purchases Study, 1935-36, U. S. Bureau of Home Economics.

Table 4.--Gross cash income from farming in nine
type-of-farming areas in Ohio, 1938 /1

| | |
|---------------|---------|
| Northwest | \$1,633 |
| West central | 1,678 |
| Central | 1,654 |
| North central | 1,395 |
| Southwest | 1,353 |
| Northeast | 1,081 |
| East central | 853 |
| South central | 705 |
| Southeast | 547 |

/1 Department of Rural Economics, Ohio State University, mimeographed bulletin no. 121.

Figures on family composition throw light on extension programs.

Table 5.--Composition of 816 nonrelief farm families
Crawford, Knox, and Richland Counties, Ohio, 1935-36

| Family type | Number of persons | Family composition | | | | | Percent-age of families |
|-------------|-------------------|--------------------|------|-----------------|-------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------|
| | | Husband | Wife | Persons over 16 | Children under 16 | Persons under or over 16 | |
| 1 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | | 29 |
| 2 | 3 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 | | 9 |
| 3 | 4 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 2 | | 5 |
| 6 | 5 or 6 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 3 or 4 | | 7 |
| 4 | 3 or 4 | 1 | 1 | 1 | - | 0 or 1 | 26 |
| 5 | 5 or 6 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 or 2 | 12 |
| 7 | 7 or 8 | 1 | 1 | - | 1 | 4 or 5 | 6 |
| 8 | 5 or 6 | 1 | 1 | 3 or 4 | 0 | | 3 |
| 9/1 | | | | | | | 3 |

/1 All families not included in types 1 through 8. These were usually large families.

Source: Bureau of Home Economics, Consumer Purchases Study.

The 2-person families that constituted 29 percent of the sample were middle aged or elderly couples. A family type that constituted 26 percent of the sample was the 3 to 4 person family with at least 3 persons over 16. This type included only one child in every four families.

Distribution by age of husbands and wives in
2-person families, 3 selected Ohio Counties, 1935-36

| Age group | Husbands Percent | Wives Percent |
|-------------------------|---------------------|------------------|
| Under 40 years | 10 | 14 |
| Between 40 and 59 years | 43 | 49 |
| 60 years and over | 47 | 37 |
| Median age | 59 years | 56 years |

If these couples were hale and hearty, they certainly constitute a recommendation for life as lived on farms in this part of Ohio.

For the entire 816 families, the heads of families fell into the following age-groups:

Distribution by age of husbands and wives in
816 nonrelief Ohio families, 1935-36.

| Age group | Husbands Percent | Wives Percent |
|----------------|---------------------|------------------|
| Under 40 years | 18 | 27 |
| 40 - 60 years | 55 | 54 |
| Over 60 years | 27 | 19 |

Naturally, in the 14 percent of 3 or 4 person families with one or two children under 16, the parents were younger than in the group as a whole.

Distribution of husbands and wives in families
with 1 and 2 children and no other persons.

| Age group | Husbands Percent | Wives Percent |
|----------------|---------------------|------------------|
| Under 30 years | 14 | 22 |
| 30 - 39 years | 39 | 35 |
| 40 - 49 years | 22 | 29 |
| 50 - 59 years | 21 | 13 |
| Over 60 years | 4 | 1 |

Children under 16.

The 816 families included 863 children under 16 years of age, an average of 1.06 per family. Almost one-third, 32 percent, had no children under 16 (families of type 1 and type 8). Families of type 4, constituting 26 percent of the sample, had one child to every four families. Of the aggregate number of children in the group, 75 percent were in families containing five or more members.

The average number of children in families of specified types is shown below:

| Family type: | Families <u>Number</u> | Families <u>Percent</u> | Average number of children under 16 |
|-----------------|---------------------------|----------------------------|--|
| All types | 816 | 100 | 1.03 |
| 1 (no children) | 236 | 29 | -- |
| 2 | 74 | 9 | 1.00 |
| 3 | 43 | 5 | 2.00 |
| 4 | 214 | 26 | 0.25 |
| 5 | 98 | 12 | 1.81 |
| 6 | 57 | 7 | 3.33 |
| 7 | 49 | 6 | 3.51 |
| 8 | 21 | 3 | -- |
| 9 (other) | 24 | 3 | 4.58 |

Families receiving various forms of relief were larger (averaging 5.3 persons) and included more children under 16 than did the nonrelief families.

What light do these figures throw on program choices and program needs?

Is it of community concern that favorable growing conditions be provided for the children - one to a family - who will carry on the race?

How many farm homes with children under 16 does the Ohio Extension Service contact directly each year, through farmer, housewife, or 4-H Club member? Through different forms of publicity?

Are Ohio extension workers, with their rich agricultural background, helping the personnel of other agencies to see how largely the health of low-income farm families depends upon the food supply they raise? Are we implementing them to carry this message to the farm homes they reach?

Forty percent of farm family diets analyzed in the North and West failed to meet minimum requirements for one or more essential nutrients. (See figure 1, page 8, "Diet rating and income, farm families, North and West".)

A diet was rated poor if it failed to provide per man-unit per day these quantities:

45 gm. protein
0.44 gm. calcium
10 mg. iron
3,000 international units, vitamin A
250 international units, vitamin B
37 mg. ascorbic acid

This list covers but a few of the essential nutrients, but includes ones that are frequently inadequately supplied. A diet short in just one nutrient was classed as poor nevertheless, because in building sturdy bodies, and in keeping them fit, the required amount of each single essential nutrient is just as important as that of any other.

A diet was rated good if it provided:

67 gm. protein
0.68 gm. calcium
15 mg. iron
6,000 international units, vitamin A
500 international units, vitamin B
75 mg. ascorbic acid
600 Sherman units or 1.8 mg. of
riboflavin (vitamin G)

Diets lying between "poor" and "good" were rated "fair."

On this basis, 60 percent of farm family diets analyzed ranked as fair or good.

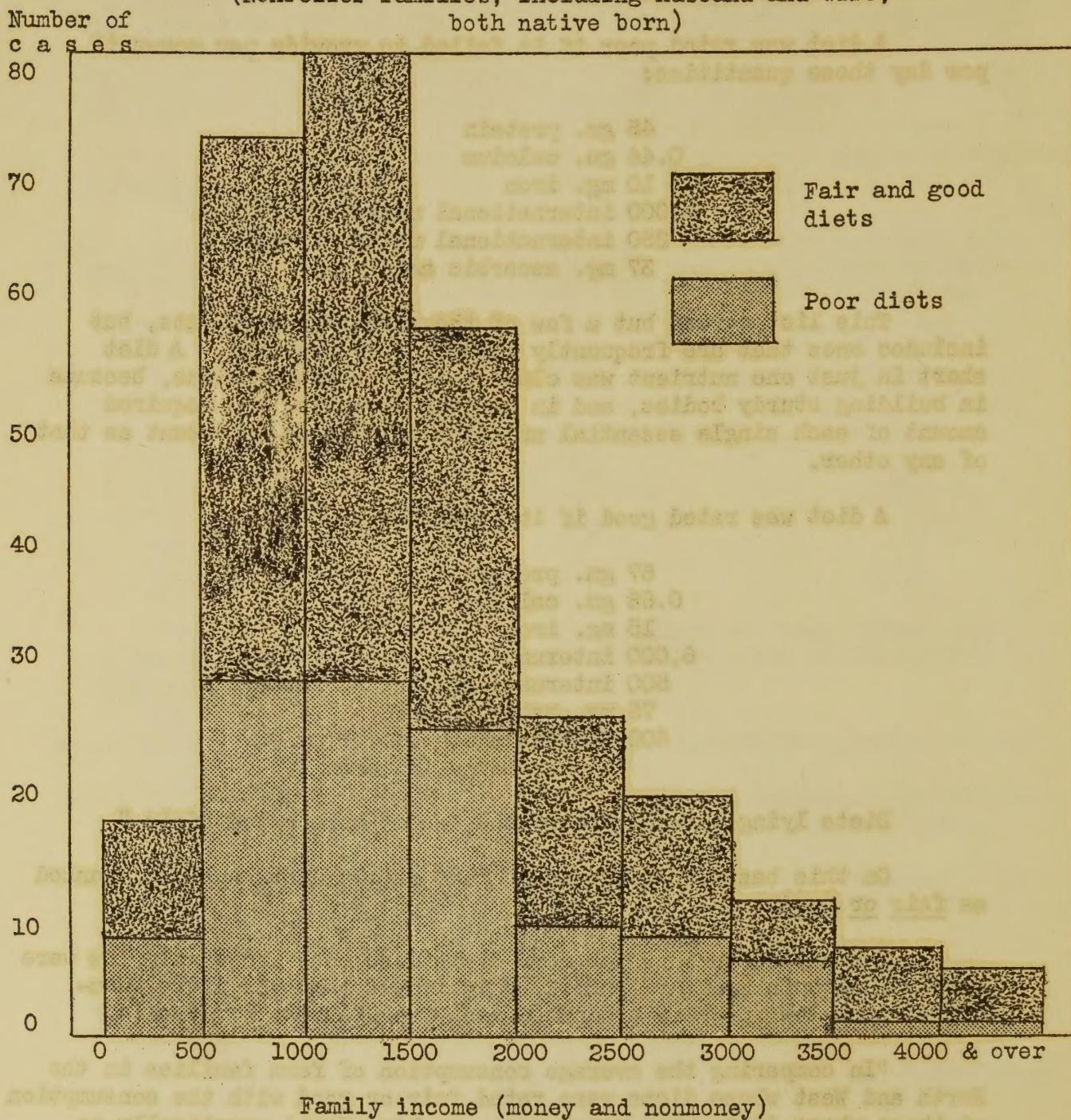
The nutrients in which farm diets were most frequently low were calcium, vitamin A and vitamin C, which means that the diets themselves were low in dairy products, eggs, vegetables, and fruits.

"In comparing the average consumption of farm families in the North and West whose diets were rated fair or good with the consumption of those whose diets were rated poor, we have found practically no difference in the figures for grain products, meats, potatoes, and sugars. The difference lay in the protective foods. Fair or good diets included 25 percent more eggs, 25 percent more butter, 34 percent more milk, 55 percent more leafy, green, and yellow vegetables, and 220 percent more tomatoes than did the diets listed as poor. . . .

DIE T RATING AND INCOME

FARM FAMILIES, NORTH AND WEST

(Nonrelief families, including husband and wife,
both native born)



Preliminary figures, Consumer Purchases Study, Bureau of Home Economics

"The chances that a farm family will get a satisfactory diet increase rapidly as the program of food production is enlarged and geared to family needs."--H. K. Stiebeling.

Home food production programs of Ohio farm families studied were low in vegetables and fruits. (See table 3 on page 3.)

Average figures for the Pennsylvania and Ohio communities where farming is diversified show that almost 2/3 of the money value of the food supply was farm furnished at every income level, and more than 2/3 of the volume, since home-produced food was valued in this study at less than retail prices.

Table 3 shows the amounts of farm-furnished food provided by the 816 Ohio families during the year of the study. Considerable quantities of dairy, livestock, and poultry products were used, but food from the vegetable garden and fruits were apparently short. Unfortunately, too few food consumption records were secured from families in the general farming areas to analyze the diets of these families apart from diets of other groups in the North and West.

Did Ohio farm families purchase the foods needed to balance deficiencies in their farm-produced supply?

They might readily have done so had they prepared a table of yearly food needs, and after careful consideration of all the facts - the outlook for prices of commodities bought and products sold; the resources of labor, capital, and management; probable income in cash and in kind, and a comparison of these with human needs for desirable planes of living - geared their food production and preservation and their food purchases to these plans.

Deficient diets open the door to poor health; good diets contribute to vigorous health.

Persons with ⁱⁿ/adequate diets suffer more commonly than do persons with good diets from such difficulties as poor bone growth, defective teeth, flabby muscles, pallor, poor complexion, underweight, indigestion, constipation, poor posture, persistent colds, and general lack of vigor.

Many studies of school children show parallels between defective diets and defective teeth.

Extension reports abound with instances where health of family members was improved as better diets were provided.

Building up the conviction in the whole farm family that vigorous health is a farm asset and that an adequate diet is a major form of health insurance, is a first step in creating an interest in planning the food supply for health.

Is the Extension Service as a whole concerned with the problem of adequate diets for Ohio farm families?

Farm and home management, engineering, food technology, and many lines of agricultural production, in addition to foods and nutrition are involved in providing a "good" year-round diet for farm families.

Obstacles in the way of securing such diets differ in different parts of the State. Some of these obstacles are deep-seated.

County extension agents, primarily responsible for teaching the health value of good diet and helping farm families plan and carry out their food supply programs, need the help of individual specialists and the best thinking of the specialist body as a whole.

If farm agents, home agents, club agents and specialists defined a few clear-cut goals and pulled together toward them, might more farm families in Ohio, at all income levels, be healthier, wealthier, and better fed?